

**AGENCY-SPECIFIC TEMPLATE
FOR REPORT TO CONGRESS UNDER P.L. 106-107, 2005**

**2005 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
PUBLIC LAW 106-107**

Social Security Administration

Participation in the Government-wide Streamlining and Grants.gov Efforts

The Social Security Administration (SSA) continued to participate in several grants streamlining initiatives over the past year that improved the effectiveness and performance of grants programs, simplified the grants application and reporting processes, improved the delivery of services to the public, and facilitated greater communication among those responsible for delivering services.

SSA staff continues to participate on the following intergovernmental workgroups and committees:

Grants.gov Stakeholders. SSA staff continues to participate in Grants.gov Stakeholders meetings to collaborate with other Federal agencies and organizations regarding the progress of Grants.gov.

Interagency Suspension and Debarment Committee. SSA staff continues to attend monthly meetings and participates as this committee addresses regulatory changes and issues related to the Excluded Parties Listing System (EPLS).

Internal Efforts to Create an Environment Conducive to Grants Streamlining and Simplification and Assess Impact of Changes

General Approach

SSA Grants Electronic Library (SSAGEL)

In the previous reporting period, SSA conducted a pilot to test an internal storage and retrieval library, SSA Grants Electronic Library (SSAGEL). Two of its grants programs were used during the pilot. SSAGEL is a document management facility that provides for the sharing of electronic grants documents across SSA's wide area network. SSAGEL is used by several components in SSA including the Office of Acquisition and Grants (OAG), multiple program offices and the Office of Finance. Documents housed in SSAGEL come to SSA in electronic format or, upon receipt in paper format, are scanned to create electronic documents. SSAGEL's proven reliability and benefits to the SSA grants program have caused SSA to move toward expanding the use of SSAGEL to SSA's entire grants portfolio. During the current reporting period, use has been expanded to include all new and continuing grants programs.

**AGENCY-SPECIFIC TEMPLATE
FOR REPORT TO CONGRESS UNDER P.L. 106-107, 2005**

SSA Grants Process Streamlining Initiative

OAG continues to include the Grants Process Streamlining Initiative as one of its priorities. SSA continues to carefully review the grant awards process to identify areas that need improvement. OAG staff continues to lead this initiative and work closely with SSA's program components and financial management staff that have key roles in the current process. SSA's objectives are to eliminate redundancies, outdated and unnecessary steps in the process, and to realign the remaining steps, working in conjunction with other initiatives such as eGrants, to achieve a smoother, more efficient process.

SSA Grants Website

SSA continues to update its grants website as changes are made to the SSA-specific Federal Grant Regulations, the SSA's Grants Administration Manual (GAM) and Grants Policy Handbook. The GAM and Policy Handbook contain the policies and procedures associated with administering the SSA grants program. The grants website continues to include published information related to present and past grant opportunities.

Implementing the Changes Affecting the Pre-Award Process

A. FedGrants.govFIND:

SSA continues to use the Federal Government-wide website FedGrants.govFIND (FIND), to publish notifications of grant opportunities. SSA has used FedGrants.gov FIND to post 100 percent of its discretionary funding opportunity announcements since the last quarter of 2004. The applicant community is pleased with the services provided by the FIND facility.

B. Announcement Template

Multiple SSA grants officials have been trained on the use of FedGrants.gov. The announcement template is used for all SSA funding opportunities.

C. Grants.govAPPLY

Grants.govAPPLY

SSA began using Grants.govAPPLY in May 2004. Applications are downloaded in PDF formatted files directly from Grants.gov into SSA's Grants Electronic Library. All five of SSA current grant programs are currently using the Grants.govAPPLY facility.

DUNS

SSA continues to implement the DUNS requirement by necessitating it to be included on all new and continuing grant applications. We continue to include guidance regarding this requirement in all announcements that are posted for grant opportunities.

**AGENCY-SPECIFIC TEMPLATE
FOR REPORT TO CONGRESS UNDER P.L. 106-107, 2005**

D. Other

SSA has posted instructions on the SSA Grants website to help train the grant applicant community on the use of the Grants.gov FIND and APPLY facilities. Each non competing applicant is also sent correspondence via email to explain the steps required of new and repeat users of Grants.gov. The instructions and correspondence address DUNS numbers, Central Contractor Registration, and all other registration and submission requirements.

One hundred percent of SSA funding opportunities are available for download and submission through Grants.gov using the standard format. Nearly all the applications received are arriving through Grants.gov. There were no new grant opportunities offered during this reporting period. The number of posted grant opportunities for continuation awards and the number of applications received through Grants.gov, by quarter is as follows:

Quarter	Request for Continuation Applications Posted	Applications Received through Grants.gov
June 2004	43	17
September 2004	106	106
December 2004	34	18
March 2005	22	65*
June 2005	131	126
September 2005		2*

(Includes applications resulting from opportunities posted in previous quarters.)*

The standardized format and its reusable aspects are delivering time savings to SSA. Barriers to full use of Grants.gov include:

- ◆ There is no present Grants.gov accommodation for applicant users with Macintosh computers.
- ◆ Some grantees experience software incompatibilities sometimes preventing them from installing PureEdge Viewer software which is required to download Grants.gov application packages.